

YMCA (Young Men's Christian Association)
310 Liberty Street
Warren
Warren County
Pennsylvania

HABS No. PA-5352

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62-WAR,
2-

PHOTOGRAPHS

WRITTEN HISTORICAL AND DESCRIPTIVE DATA

HISTORIC AMERICAN BUILDINGS SURVEY
MID-ATLANTIC REGION, NATIONAL PARK SERVICE
DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR
PHILADELPHIA, PENNSYLVANIA 19106

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HISTORIC AMERICAN BUILDINGS SURVEY

YMCA
(Young Men's Christian Association)

HABS No. PA-5352

Location: 310 Liberty Street, Warren, Warren County, Pennsylvania

Present Owner: Young Men's Christian Association
212 Lexington Avenue
Warren, Pennsylvania 16365

Present Use: Vacant

Significance: The Warren YMCA building at 310 Liberty Avenue, built 1912-1914, is a contributing element to the National Register eligible historic district in which it is located. It stands between a mid- to late-nineteenth century residential area to the north and a late-nineteenth century commercial area to the south. The district represents the prosperous period of Warren's history when lumber and oil production dominated the local economy. The YMCA building is in harmony in scale and building materials with the surrounding structures. Moreover, the YMCA in Warren was founded in 1886 during the town's period of greatest expansion and prosperity. Since its beginning the YMCA has been an important social institution in the community.

PART I. HISTORICAL INFORMATION

A. Physical History

1. Date of Erection: 1912-1914. The Board of Directors inspected the new building on September 30, 1914. Acceptance was on December 24, 1914. Formal opening on January 2, 1915.
2. Architect: (Original 1911-1914). Louis E. Jallade, New York, New York. Architect's biographic data is unknown; services were obtained through National Council Young Men's Christian Association Building and Furnishings Service. Renovation: (1959-1963) Thomas Hendryx, Bradford, Pennsylvania.
3. Original and Subsequent Owners: Young Men's Christian Association of Warren, Pennsylvania.

Description of Property: Beginning at a point which is situate on the easterly right-of-way of Liberty Street, aforesaid point marks the southwest corner of premises belonging to George Templeton, and is further referenced to as being South $11^{\circ} 18'$ East, 104.25 feet along aforesaid Liberty Street right-of-way from its' point of intersection with the southerly right-of-way line of Fourth Avenue;

thence North $78^{\circ} 44'$ East, along the south line of aforesaid Templeton premises, 140.5 feet to a point which is situate on the Westerly line of premises belonging to Harold Ristau;

thence the following bearings and distances along the aforesaid Ristau premises;

South $11^{\circ} 18'$ East, 127.83' feet to a point,

North $78^{\circ} 44'$ East, 92.80' feet to a point which marks the northwest corner of premises belonging to Varod Wright;

thence South $11^{\circ} 18'$ East, along aforesaid Wright premises, 74.25 feet to a point which marks the northeast corner of the U.S. Post Office;

thence South $78^{\circ} 44'$ West, along the northerly line of the U.S. Post Office, 233.30 feet to a point which is situate on the westerly right-of-way line of Liberty Street, which is situate North $11^{\circ} 18'$ West, 160.45 feet along aforesaid right-of-way line from its' intersection with the Northerly right-of-way line of Third Avenue;

thence North $11^{\circ} 18'$ West, along the easterly right-of-way line of Liberty Street, 202.08 feet to a point which marks the place of beginning.

4. Builder, Contractor and Suppliers: Original (1911-1914). General Contractor, J.A. Nixon and Son, Titusville, Pennsylvania. Heating and Plumbing Contractor, Schnellharmer, Warren, Pennsylvania. Renovations (1959-1963): General Contractor, Anundsen Construction Company and Carl Swanson.

5. Original Plans and Construction: No original plans and drawings have been located.
6. Alterations and Additions: In 1935 a miniature golf course was constructed in a building to the rear of the original structure. A gymnasium was added to the rear of the main building sometime prior to 1946. In February 1946 a fire began in the janitor's room on the gymnasium balcony and spread quickly to the studding of a room at the back of the second floor of the main structure. By the time the fire was put out, major damage had resulted to the gymnasium and the first and second floors of the main building. Major renovations of the first and second floors were accomplished in the next few years. In 1949 a bowling alley was installed in the golf building, and in 1953 a chapel was installed. A new swimming pool, which had been authorized by the building committee as early as the late 1940s was built in 1961-1963. A handball court was also built in the 1960s. Despite all these changes and additions, by 1981 the building was no longer adequate for programs needs, and the YMCA moved to a new structure.

B. Historical Context

The YMCA in Warren has been in continuous existence since its formation in 1886. During its early years the YMCA occupied a building at 211-213 Liberty Street. A fire destroyed this building on October 11, 1911. After the fire the YMCA operated from temporary headquarters in the Mansion House on Fourth Avenue, West until its new building was completed in 1914.

The YMCA's stated goal throughout its history in Warren has been to help people achieve their greatest potential and thus lead more meaningful Christian lives. In service of this goal, the Warren YMCA has founded many local groups and initiated a variety of important community activities. The library, the historical society and the Boy Scouts (re-organized in 1916) had their beginnings at the YMCA. The YMCA also encouraged participation in work with draftees, the armed services, prisoners of war, and missionary efforts. The YMCA's mission also includes providing and promoting family activities. These have included classes, counseling, dancing, physical training, and health maintenance. Until the 1960s the YMCA provided dormitory and food services. When these were discontinued the U.S. Forest Service rented the third floor from the YMCA to use as offices and drafting and engineering headquarters for the nearby Allegheny National Forest.

PART II. ARCHITECTURAL INFORMATION

A. General Statement:

1. Architectural Character: The building consists of the original main block fronting on Liberty Street and a number of additions to the rear, built chiefly for specific athletic activities. The rear structures are largely utilitarian, and no attempt was made in their design to match the style or materials of the original building. The original building is of no distinctive architectural style but is consistent in scale and materials with other structures in the vicinity.
2. Condition of Fabric: The brickwork of the original building is intact, but the roof is leaking, causing the ceiling to collapse. The gymnasium roof has leaked for many years, and the ceiling and structural members are near collapse. The annex building's roof and concrete block walls have deteriorated, and the building is a structural hazard. The natatorium is a structurally sound, modern steel-framed brick and glass block building. However the roof leaks profusely.

B. Description of Exterior:

1. Overall dimensions: The building consists of the original structure fronting 100' on Liberty Street by 38' in depth; the gymnasium building of a later date which is 73' parallel to Liberty Street by 93' in depth; the annex connected to the rear of the gymnasium, 56' parallel to Liberty Street by 95' in depth; and the natatorium, built most recently, 45' parallel to Liberty Street by 96' in depth. The original building is a basement plus three stories. The gymnasium is one story with a mezzanine. The annex is one story, and the natatorium is one story with a partial basement for filters.
2. Foundations: The structure of the foundation is unknown, but is presumed to be concrete. It is built on alluvial soils. The water table varies with the season.
3. Walls: The walls of the original building are brick and stucco. A modest diamond motif beneath the first and second story windows is the only wall decoration. Ceramic tiles were added above the entrance when a new, shorter, metal frame door was installed. The rusticated stucco water table is deteriorated.
4. Structural systems, framing: The original building had exterior brick bearing walls, interior wood stud bearing partitions, wood joists, floors, and roof structure. At some time the wood bearing partitions were replaced with steel beams and columns from basement to roof. The gymnasium and annex are concrete block walls, slab on grade floor and

roof framing of steel beams and wood joists. Roofs throughout are flat. The natatorium is a steel framed building with brick and block exterior walls. The pool is concrete and is tile lined.

5. Porches, stoops, balconies, bulkheads: The only porch like structure is the front entrance, which shows on the photographs, and is a part of the main structure.
6. Chimneys: One square brick chimney exists but shows only on the roof.
7. Openings:
 - a. Doorways and doors: The entrance doors are aluminum and glass.
 - b. Windows and shutters: Windows are double hung wood in the original building, industrial steel sash in the gym and annex, and glass block in the natatorium.
8. Roof:
 - a. Shape, covering: All roofs are flat built-up.
 - b. Cornice, eaves: No cornices exist.
 - c. Dormers, cupolas, towers: No roof ornamentation exists.

C. Description of Interior:

1. Floor plans: Measured floor plans drawn to scale accompany this report.
 - a. Basement
 - b. First Floor
 - c. Second Floor
 - d. Third Floor
2. Stairways: Stairways are non-ornamental or fire exits with no architectural detail of note.
3. Flooring: Finish flooring is V.A.T. in all areas except the pool, its' aprons, and the shower rooms which are ceramic tile.
4. Wall and ceiling finish: Wall finishes are plaster or concrete blocks.
5. Openings:
 - a. Doorways and doors: All interior doors are flush oak veneer in oak frames with no casing and schlage aluminum locks.

- b. Windows: Windows are wood double hung with plaster return jambs, or industrial steel sash in concrete blocks, or glass blocks in concrete block openings - no detailed trim remains.
- 6. Decorative features and trim: No ornamental interior wood work exists.
- 7. Hardware: Door hardware is schlage, key in knob, aluminum locksets. Hinges are aluminum button tip butts.
- 8. Mechanical equipment:
 - a. Heating, air conditioning, ventilation: Heating is from a gas fired furnace in the boiler room with convectors in each room.
 - b. Lighting: Lighting throughout is fluorescent 48" fixtures. No evidence of earlier systems exist.
 - c. Plumbing: No evidence of original plumbing exists. Present fixtures are contemporary cast iron enameled or vitrified china.
 - d. The original structure has been renovated so many times to try to meet the changing needs and programs of the Young Men's Christian Association that virtually nothing except the exterior brick and stucco remain of that building.
- 9. Original Furnishings: No original furnishings exist.

D. Site:

- 1. General setting and orientation: The site is at 310 Liberty Street. The main entrance faces west. The buildings were generally built to the property lines and the remaining space paved for parking. No lawn area or landscape trees exist. A Baptist Church originally stood to the south of the property. In 1923 the YMCA purchased this property, then in 1929 sold it to the U.S. government to be used for a post office. The Warren post office presently forms the southern boundary of the property.
- 2. Historic landscape design: The original site, building and subsequent improvements do not appear to have any important historical landscape attributes.
- 3. Outbuildings: All outbuildings and/or additions were incorporated into the present structure during various renovations.

PART III. SOURCES OF INFORMATION

A. Architectural drawings: Original architectural drawing are not available. A copy of first floor and modifications during the period 1959-1963 were made available from the Young Men's Christian Association, 212 Lexington Avenue, Warren, Pennsylvania, 16365 through the Young Men's Christian Association Historical Library, 291 Broadway, New York, New York. Tracings have been prepared from these drawings.

B. Historic Views

Photocopies of historic views are in the photograph section. All views are photographs taken by Everett Borg, Sr. of Warren, Pennsylvania between 1912 and 1967. The original photographs are in the possession of the Borg family.

C. Interviews: *

1. Julius L. Thorn, Warren, Pennsylvania, Executive Director of Young Men's Christian Association from 1957-1968. February 10 & 18, 1986
2. Robert J. Hammerbeck, Warren, Pennsylvania
Physical Director 1954-1968
Executive Director 1968 to present
3. F. Everett Borg, Warren, Pennsylvania, Photographer, Entrepreneur, Photo Supply; negatives and prints from family business.
4. Warren County Historical Society, Fourth Avenue West, Warren, Pennsylvania (Chase Putnam)
5. Young Men's Christian Association Historical Library, 291 Broadway, New York, New York (John Randle)
6. Warren Public Library, Market Street, Warren, Pennsylvania, (Chase Putnam)

*February 19-20, 1986, unless otherwise noted.

D. Bibliography:

1. Primary and unpublished sources:

Thorn, Julius L., "Young Men's Christian Association, Warren, Pennsylvania, The First Hundred Years, 1867-1967." v.1 1969.

Warren County Historical Society, Warren, Pennsylvania, Young Men's Christian Association Collection, December, 1976.

Borg, F. Everett, photographer, "Miscellaneous collection of photographs, Young Men's Christian Association groups, and buildings" Warren, Pennsylvania, Circa 1910-1967.

Warren Young Men's Christian Association, 212 Lexington Avenue, Warren, Pennsylvania, Special Collection, programs, historical sketches, manuals, reports, publicity materials, approximately 2".

2. Secondary and published sources:

Young Men's Christian Association Historical Library, 291 Broadway,
New York, New York, Warren, Pennsylvania Young Men's Christian
Association Collection.

- E. Likely sources not yet investigated: Morgue of newspapers, both past
and present.
- F. Supplemental material: There is no apparent supplemental material
available.

PART IV. PROJECT INFORMATION:

Rouse-Brokenstraw Associates Corporation is a Pennsylvania non-profit
corporation and has received a Reservation of Funds, September 30, 1985,
from the U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development to develop a
fifty (50) unit housing for the elderly project to be funded by a
Direct Loan under the Section 202 Program and coupled with Rental Assis-
tance Payments as derived from the Section 8 Housing Assistance Program.

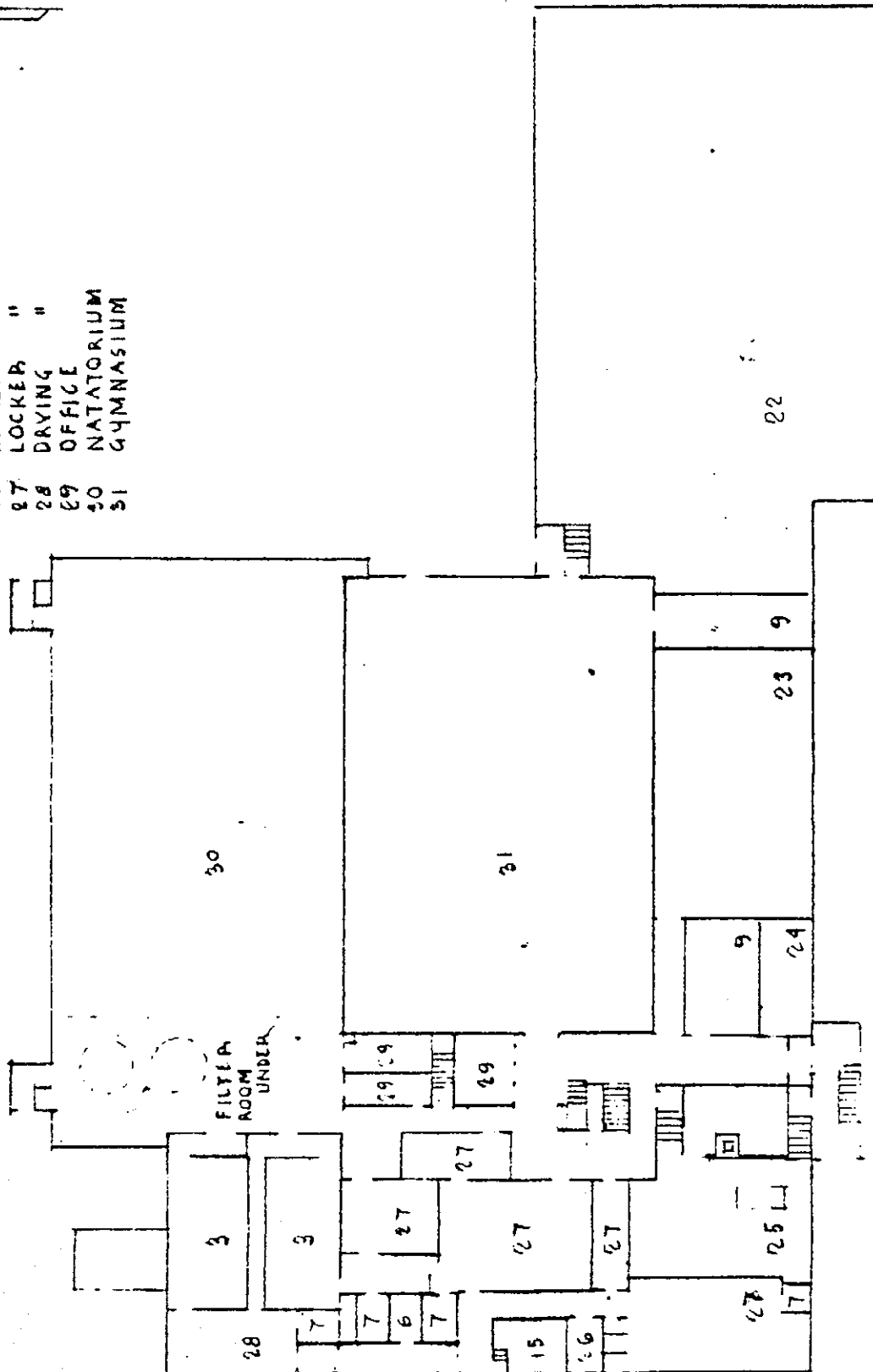
Under Section 106 of the National Historic Preservation Act of 1966,
mitigative documentation of the YMCA, the original structure on the site,
was required because the building is in a National Register eligible
historic district.

Additionally, the site is located in an eligible Historic District as
designated by the Pennsylvania Bureau of Historic Preservation, and as
such, the Bureau has required that this structure resemble as closely
as possible the buildings in the general area. Accordingly, the Bureau
has required that a brick veneer be installed on the structure which is
prohibited by HUD's cost containment policy. Therefore, the Sponsor must
obtain, through outside resources, additional financial aid to assist
in the cost of the demolition of the existing structure, as well as, the
removal of the existing foundations; and to install compacted fill on
the site in order to accommodate the development of the proposed Project.

Prepared by: Lorence F. Brown
Title: Executive Director
Affiliation: Managing Agent to
Rouse-Brokenstraw
Associates Corporation

Date: February 21, 1986

22	HANDBALL COURTS
23	WEIGHT ROOM
24	ELECTRICAL
25	BOILER ROOM
26	MAKEUP "
27	LOCKER "
28	DRYING "
29	OFFICE
30	NATATORIUM
31	GYMNASIUM



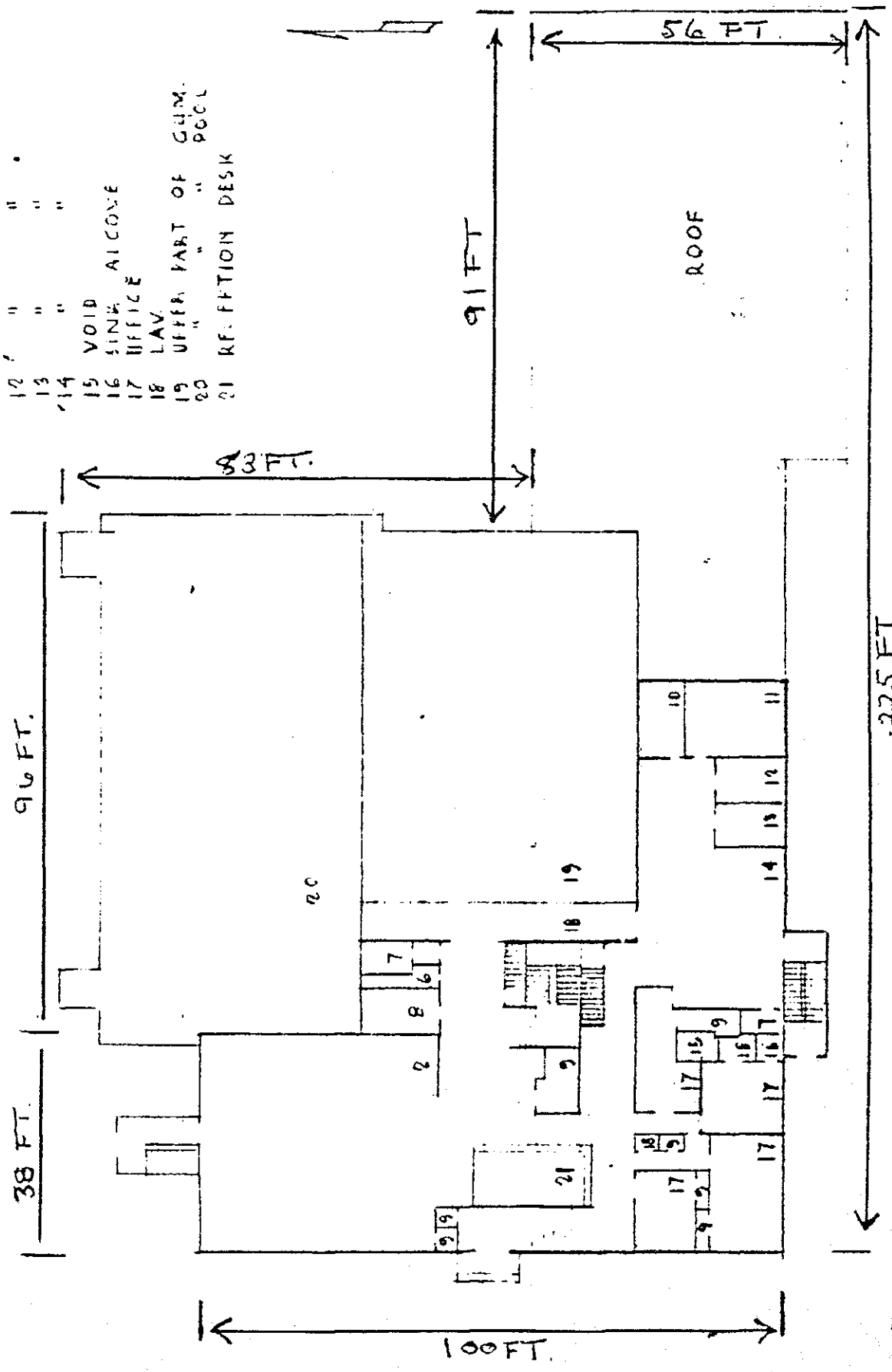
BASEMENT PLAN

Drawn: February 13, 1986

YMCA
WARREN, PA.

60 50 40 30 20 10 5 0
SCALE

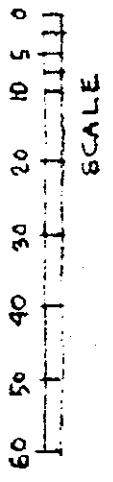
- 10 EXERCISE ROOM
- 11 " " "
- 12 " " "
- 13 " " "
- 14 " " "
- 15 VOID
- 16 SINK ALCOVE
- 17 OFFICE
- 18 LAV.
- 19 UPPER PART OF GYM.
- 20 " " POOL
- 21 REFLECTION DESK

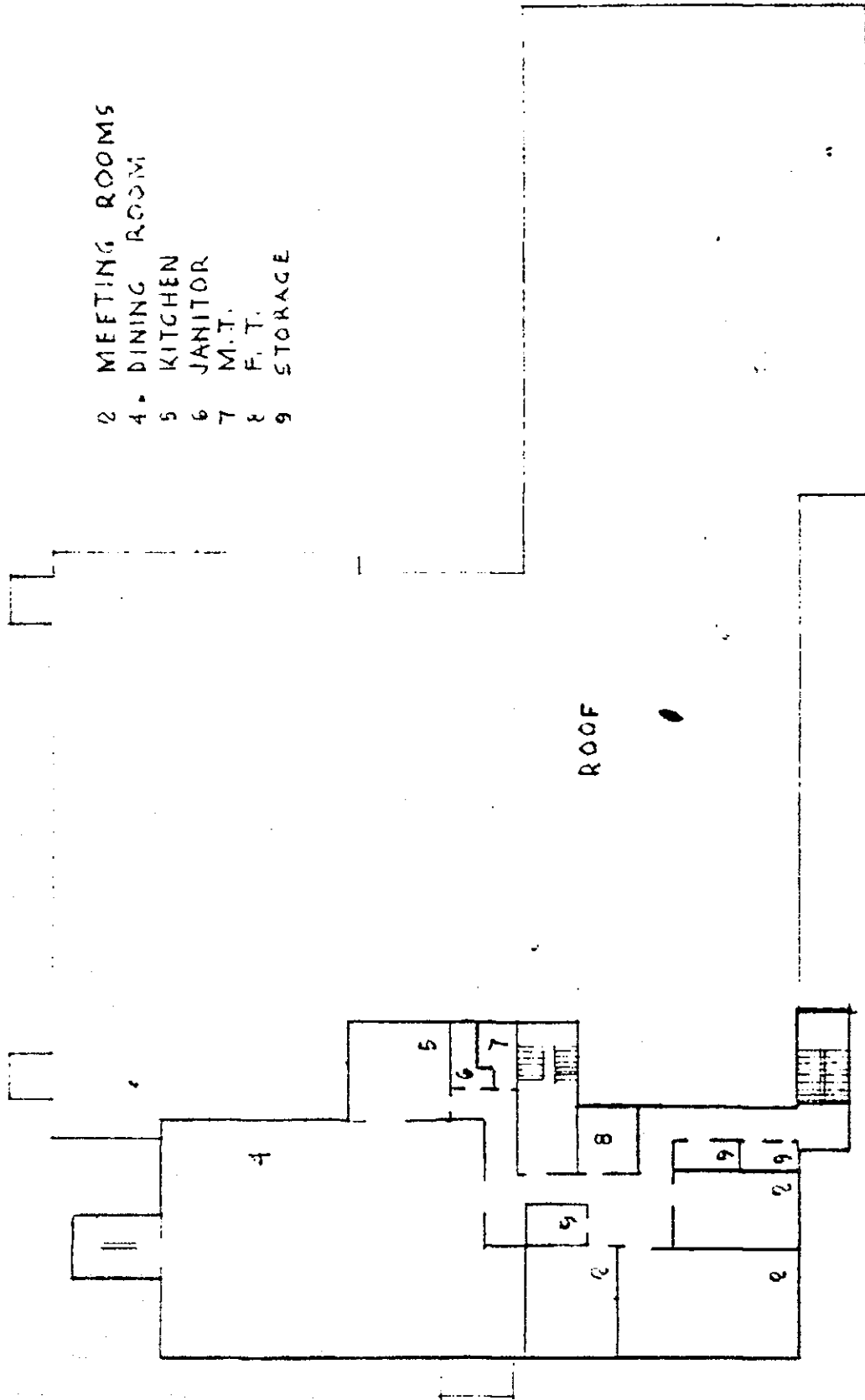


YMCA WARREN, PA.

1ST FLOOR PLAN

Drawn: February 13, 1986

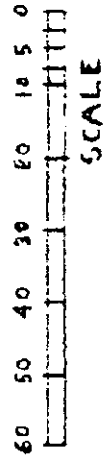


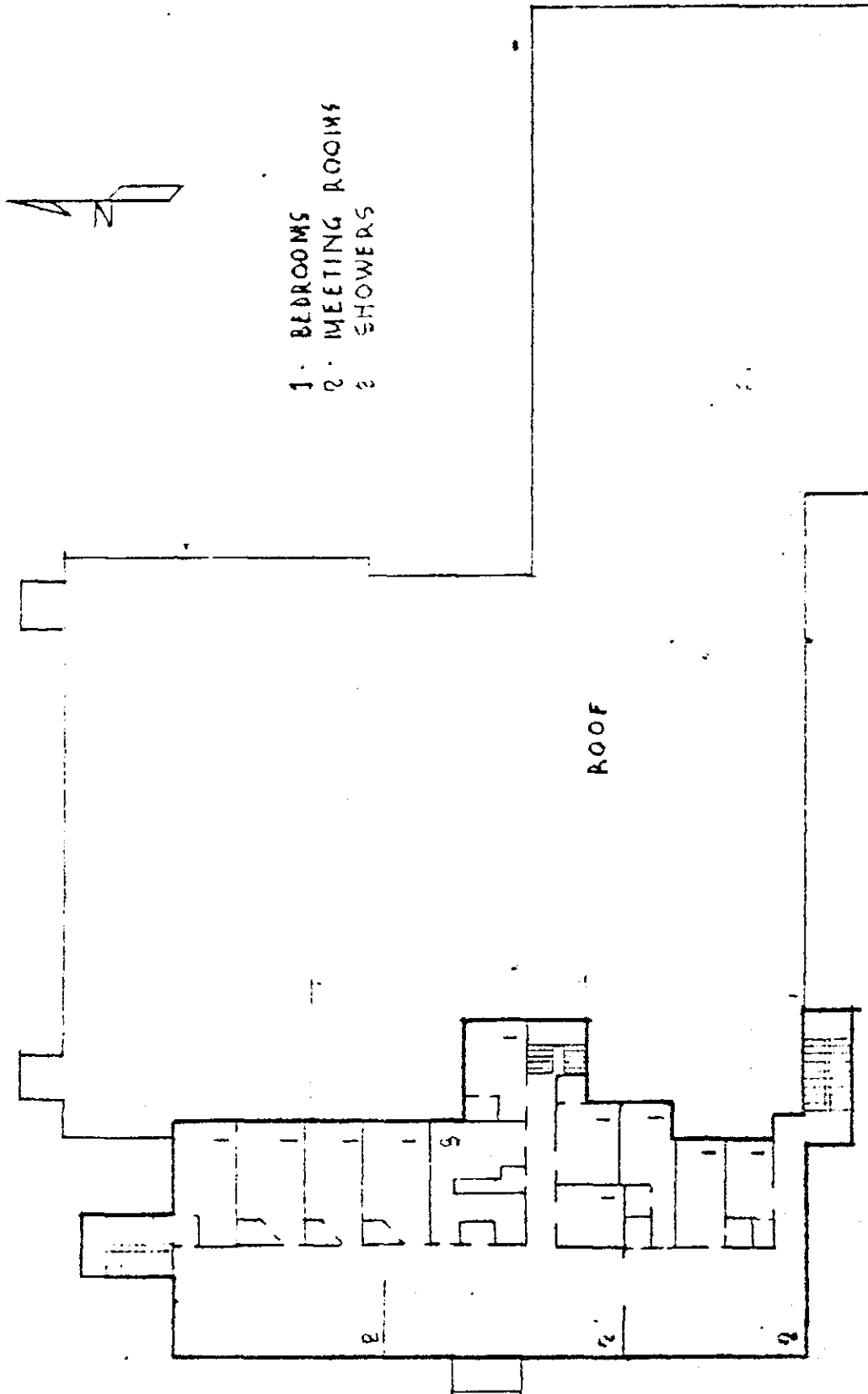


2ND FLOOR PLAN

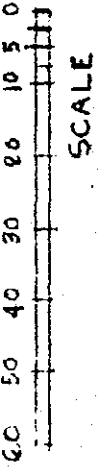
Drawn: February 13, 1986

YMCA WARDEN, PA.





YMCA WARREN, PA.



3rd FLOOR PLAN
Drawn: February 13, 1986